

NOTES

OF A

TRIP TO BOW RIVER.

NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES.

BY

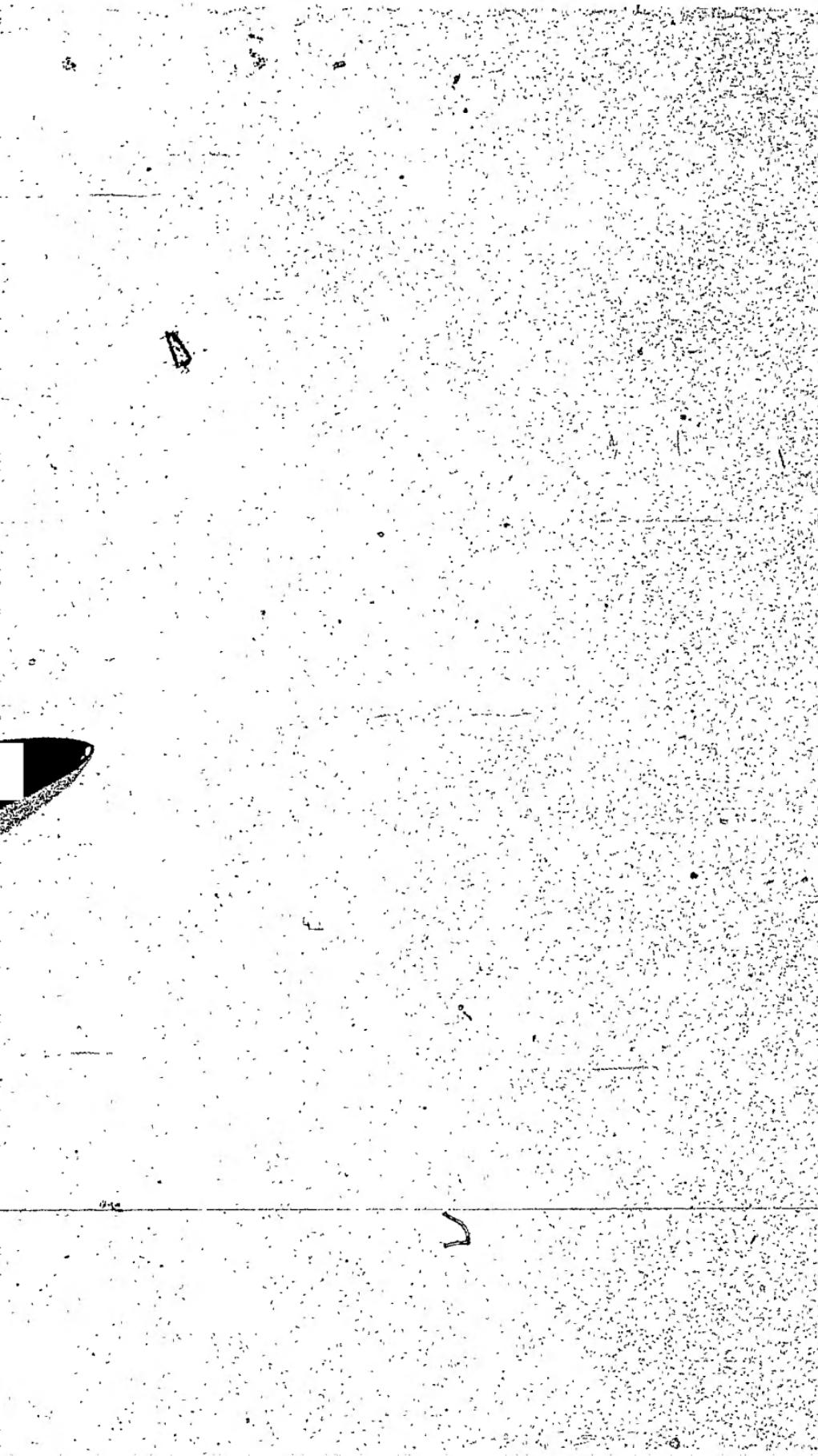
D. McEACHRAN, F.R.C.V.S

VICE-PRESIDENT AND MANAGING-DIRECTOR OF THE COCHRANE RANCH COMPANY.

(REPRINTED FROM THE GAZETTE.)

6
MONTREAL.

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NOTES OF A TRIP

TO

FORT BENTON, MONTANA,

VIA

BISMARCK, DAKOTAH, AND THE MISSOURI RIVER.

BY D. McEACHRAN, F.R.C.V.S.

One of the first results of the gigantic undertaking to build the Canadian Pacific Railway, which is to connect ocean to ocean by an iron road running through Canadian territory, was the formation of companies for the purpose of establishing extensive cattle ranches in the rich grazing belt of land forming the slopes and foot-hills of the Rocky Mountains. Most glowing reports of the fertility of the soil, the mildness of the climate, the abundance of water and the inexhaustible growth of rich, nutritious grasses were published by surveyors and others who had visited "the Great Lone Land," and this, together with the knowledge of the fact that within a very short time this rich belt would be accessible by railway accommodation, created a speculative interest in the new territory thus about to be opened up. The first to move in this matter was Senator Cochrane, of Compton, who, after a careful consideration of the matter, induced the writer to associate himself with him in the enterprise, and after visiting Chicago and St. Louis and putting himself in communication with ranchmen of experience, and collecting what reliable information could be obtained, and in view of the prospective emigration of thousands of agriculturists and stock-raisers, who would necessarily seek homes in that great prairie land as soon as its soil, climate, and boundless extent became known, it was determined to form a joint stock company, and at once proceed with the undertaking. After the necessary formalities being complied with, letters patent were granted to Hon. M. H. Cochrane, D. McEachran, James

A. Cochrane, John M. Browning and James Walker, the name of the firm being "The Cochrane Ranche Company" (limited), and the necessary application for land was made. Applications for tracts of land for grazing purposes were also made by Mr. Jonas Jones, Mr. A. P. Patrick, Messrs. Gibbs & Morgan, Mr. Fred. Stimson, Mr. J. P. Wiser, M.P., and Captain Milburne.

The following notes were written as a diary of the trip which was made to the Bow River district, for the purpose of selecting the location for the ranche, and were not intended for publication—except for private distribution among the friends of those who accompanied us, and it was only on the urgent solicitation of several friends who had perused the notes that the writer consented to give them to the press in their hurriedly written and crude form.

OUR PARTY,

consisting of Hon. M. H. Cochrane, Compton; Mr. James Gibb, Quebec; Mr. Fred Stimson and the writer, left Montreal on Thursday evening, 2nd June, and proceeded direct to Chicago, where we arrived without accident or incident worthy of recording. Here we met Messrs. Wiser, of Prescott, and Mr. F. Lewis, of Montreal, who joined us, and after a hurried visit to the stock yards we returned to the Grand Pacific Hotel and sat down to a most enjoyable dinner, such, in fact as can only be got there, at which considerable amusement was afforded by the masterly appetite of one of the party who astonished the colored waiters by the num-

NOTE.—Owing to the manuscript of the trip up the Missouri having been left at Calgarry, the notes previously published commenced at Fort Benton. We now present to our readers some interesting descriptions of a steamboat journey on the Missouri River.—EDITOR.

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ber of his orders and rapidity with which the vitals disappeared.

In the evening we left for St. Paul, Minn., passing through Illinois, northern Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota. We reached St. Paul on Sunday morning, put up at the Merchants' Hotel, where we were comfortably cared for, drove around the city and across the great bridge which spans the Mississippi, the flats on the opposite shore of which show ample evidence of the recent floods, during which many houses were lifted off their foundations and thrown on their sides.

St. Paul is comparatively a new city, but its growth and business progress is simply astonishing. It can boast of several streets of handsome substantial stores, numerous palatial residences, the whole place having the air of business progress and the boom of prosperous times. Leaving St. Paul in the evening, we reached Bismarck, Dakota Territory, about 6.30 the following evening, having passed through the great wheat zone of Dakota, of which Fargo is the centre. The great wheat farm, known as the Dalrymple Farm, of which so much has been written, was pointed out to us. Not having stopped there, we can only give passing impressions, and they were unanimously favorable. The land is flat, open prairie, of a rich, black soil, level as a table as far as the eye can reach. As we pass, the enormous wheat fields look green and promising. Of all the lands which we have passed through the country round Mapleton and Fargo impressed us most favorably.

BISMARCK.

Bismarck, is *de facto* a frontier town. Until very recently it was the terminal station of the Northern Pacific Railway and the shipping port of the Western Missouri. It was started in 1875, by the opening of a whiskey shop, and to-day it contains a population of over 2,000, but it is evident that the example set by the pioneer has been faithfully followed by new comers, for at least three-fourths of the buildings are grog-shops, gambling-houses or places of amusement. The principal hotel is also the railway station, called "The Sheridan House," kept by mine host Blv, and may be considered as a fairly comfortable hotel. Here we were joined by Hon. Patrick Lyon, Capt. Winder, Mr. Chipman, a Nova Scotian, Mr. S. Gibb and Mr. Sharples, of Quebec. Here also we met the first consignment of stock for the

Cochrane Ranche, consisting of five short-horn and three Hereford bulls from the Hill-burst herd at Compton, also fourteen mares, two thoroughbred stallions, ("Mosstrooper," by "Milesian," and "Konrad," by "Morgan,") a large jackass and an imported sheep-dog, and a fine mastiff, "The Marquis," all under the charge of Major E. A. Baynes. Having three days to wait for our steamer, we made what purchases we required, and took advantage of an offer of a high Government functionary to show us the "city by gaslight." Our first visit was to a "keno" gambling-house, where we stayed but a short time, the disgusting sight of seeing gambling in its worst form, and the foul air and still fouler language soon drove us from the place, none of us caring to stay long enough even to comprehend the game, which was new to us. We next visited a faro-bank, where similar scenes presented themselves, and money, in most cases hard-earned, and the loss of which could be ill-afforded, passed bands as rapidly as it could be counted. We could not help remarking the general expression of abandonment depicted in the faces and nervous expression of the frequenters of these dens. Our next place of visit was to the "opera house," a wooden structure, the entrance to which is a bar-room. At the counter tickets had to be procured, the charge for entrance to the ground floor being twenty-five cents, to the boxes fifty cents. The building is about thirty feet wide and about seventy-five feet deep. We looked into the pit. Here we saw a sawdust-covered floor, rough, unplanned board seats, and sitting, lounging or walking around were about forty or fifty of the rough frontiersmen, dressed with all the carelessness of the life they lead, some with coats on, many without, all with large, wide-brimmed hats, nearly all smoking or chewing tobacco. The Missouri steamboat "rooster," the teamster, the cow-boy and the street gamin, were all represented. Ascending the narrow stairway we reached the gallery, which was partitioned off into a row of curtained boxes, in which were seated in lounging attitudes the better-off class dressed in the height of regular fashion, rings and paste diamonds forming a conspicuous part of their dress. These boxes are connected with the stage by a narrow stairway on each side, by which the actresses reached the boxes and spent their time between the acts, being regaled by beer or champagne according to the taste or extravagance of the occupants;

about half a dozen women acted as waiters, and their dress, manners and loose conduct and conversation indicated the life of immorality which they lead. The scenery and surroundings were of the most primitive nature, and the singing and acting were execrable. While we were looking on a large woman with a voice like a cow-horn attempted to sing a vulgar ditty, "Champagne and oysters."

The orchestra consisted of four pieces, lead by a cornet player who, as one of our party remarked, must have been eating onions, so disagreeable was the toot-toot of his brassy instrument.

We next visited "the varieties," a combination of a gambling hell, drinking shop and concert hall. This place seemed to be more frequented than the other, and like it was filled by the most demoralized of men and women. We only waited long enough to see a spectacular (tableaux vivans) representation of "Charity" (?) but as we considered that it would be a charitable act for the exhibitor to have supplied a little more clothing to cover the stout but by no means shapely limbs of the painted beauty, and having paid toll by taking cigars apiece from the hands of a most accommodating caroty-haired female waiter, we terminated our visit, feeling that there must be "something wrong in the State of Denmark" to allow such demoralizing establishments to exist even on the frontier.

Before leaving Bismarck we held an important meeting to consider certain provisions which we thought necessary to petition the Northwest Council to include in the regulations governing the stock raising business in the Territory.

The following gentlemen were present:—Hon. M. H. Cochrane, J. P. Wiser, M.P., Captain Winder, Mr. W. F. Lewis, Mr. Fred Stinson, Hon. Patrick Lyon, Mr. J. E. Chapman, Mr. James Gibb, Mr. E. A. Baynes, and Mr. D. McEachran.

On the motion of Mr. J. P. Wiser, Senator Cochrane was called to the chair, and the writer was appointed secretary. After freely discussing the following suggestions relating to the stock-raising interests of the Canadian Northwest Territories, it was moved by Mr. J. P. Wiser, seconded by Captain Winder, and resolved—"That a petition embodying the following resolutions be prepared and presented to the Governor and Council of the said Northwest Territories, humbly praying that the same or similar regulations for the

protection of stock-raisers in the Territories do become law:—

First.—That all cattle and horses must be branded, and all brands must be registered and advertised for a reasonable length of time each year in at least one newspaper in the Northwest Territories and one published in Montana, United States, and that any person or company engaged in stock-raising in these Territories failing to do so within three months of the beginning of each year, or of his starting a stock-raising ranche, he shall, on conviction, pay a fine not exceeding \$100.

Secondly.—That a time be specified by law during the spring and autumn of each year, at which the round-up for the district shall commence, and be continued until all the cattle have been branded, and that the termination of the round-up shall be ended by a majority vote of the representatives of each ranche. Of this date due notice shall be given by proper advertisement, and that any person failing to comply with this regulation shall be subject to a penalty not exceeding \$500, the half of said fine to go to the informer.

Thirdly.—Any person found on the prairies or travelling with brands in their possession unless satisfactorily accounted for, during the period prescribed by law at which no branding shall be done, shall, on conviction, be subject to a penalty not exceeding \$100.

Fourthly.—In case of any dispute of the ownership of an animal, it shall be decided by three disinterested persons chosen by the votes of a representative of each herd, and from this decision there shall be no appeal.

Fifthly.—Every person or persons who cultivate land within the district proclaimed by Government as set apart for grazing purposes, must fence in and protect their crops. The owners of cattle within said area of grazing land shall not be responsible for any damage which may be done to their crops by stock.

The meeting was adjourned to meet at Fort Benton on arrival of the steamers about sailing from Bismarck.

(Signed,) _____

M. H. COCHRANE,
J. P. WISER,
W. F. LEWIS,
JAMES GIBB,
J. E. CHAPMAN,
W. WINDER,
PATRICK B. LYON,
F. S. STINSON,
D. MCEACHERAN.

The principal objects of interest in the neighborhood of Bismarck are the Missouri River, and the extensive bridges in the course of erection across the river to Mandan. Owing to the quicksands which form the bottom of the river, it is necessary to go down sixty feet to get a rock formation for the piers of the bridges. Already a considerable sand-bar is formed fully half-way across the river. This in such a moving bed is easily accomplished by simply driving in a few posts here and there and placing a few logs across; it is astonishing how fast a sand-bar will form.

Fort Lincoln is situated just opposite Bismarck; it is similar to all American frontier forts, and is worthy of note only as being the headquarters of the late General Custer, who, with his whole command, about 300 men, was killed at the Black Hills by the Indians.

A MISSOURI STEAMBOAT.

Our steamer The Red Cloud, of the Baker Line, having arrived, we paid her a visit, and it must be admitted that many of the ways and things which seemed primitive and behind the age, by practical experience of a trip on the river, have convinced us that circumstances alter cases, and that what will suit on one river will not answer on another. The boat is about 250 feet long by about 40 feet wide. She draws 3 feet 6 inches when loaded to her capacity. The main deck is about four feet above the water, and has projecting wings which overlap it, and on which she carries her firewood. The hold is four feet deep, and extends through her whole extent. The boilers and furnaces are amidships, and are not covered in. The engine house is in the stern; it is partially enclosed. In the space between the boilers and engine-room, freight of all kinds is packed, and for the present our horses and bulls are stabled. The second deck is the saloon and state-rooms, which consists of a long open saloon, which is also the dining-room, in which are five tables. It is a comfortable, well-lighted room, with a stove at each end, which are lit when required. There are 22 state-rooms, capable of accommodating about 50 passengers. The cook-house and kitchen are off the saloons. In rear is a ladies' cabin, opening off which are two large rooms. Above this deck is another deck, affording a promenade which, were it not for the falling cinders which

showers down from the smoke-stack, would be often enjoyed by the passengers.

The officers' rooms are built on this deck, and above these tower the pilot-house. The propelling power consists of a large wheel, about thirty feet wide and twenty feet in diameter, placed across the stern, the utility of which was not at first apparent; however, we afterwards experienced the fact that in many places of this river side-wheels or screws would be useless from the quantity of drift timber and the shallowness of the river.

Two objects attract the attention of a stranger. There are two large poles, like derricks, one at each side of the bow, suspended by blocks high enough to clear the water; these we afterwards found to be very useful appendages. When the boat sticks fast, as she often does in the shallows of the river, whose bed is constantly shifting, and where a deep channel is found to-day a shallow sand bank may be in a week, these poles are lowered down, and by aid of steam windlasses working ropes through the blocks, the boat is lifted or pushed off or over the bank.

Our first night on board was spent at the landing, and here we experienced a terrific thunder-storm, the loud peals of which rent the air and hushed all nature into silence, and the torrents of rain caused a rapid rising of the river. The storm, however, was of short duration, and glorious sunshine and clear atmosphere was followed by a feeling of relief and lightness which is so enjoyable after the heat and depression preceding a summer storm.

THE MEN STRIKE.

Here, however, we found that though far away on the frontier and almost beyond civilization, the curse of modern times had reached, and we had to submit to a vexatious delay because the crews of all the boats were on "a strike." Fortunately for us, our captain succeeded in making terms, and we pulled out and crossed to the Mandan side of the river least they should again "go-out," and here we had to wait for eight precious hours for the purser—or clerk, as he is called—who was ashore, and as his antics betrayed when he arrived, he had been enjoying himself with the inebriating cup.

OUR CAPTAIN AND CREW.

The captain is a quiet, shrewd American. He has had a long experience of boating on

this river ; he says but little, thinks a good deal and attends to his business ; he neither smokes nor drinks, and allows no liquor to be sold on the boat. Our first mate, a Memphis man, is the converse of his superior, cheek is stamped on his face and his tongue knows no bridle, he estimates his knowledge and acquirements at no small figure. What he has not seen or done, or where he has not been, would be useless to imagine. He is resplendent in white shirt and diamond pin, in giving his address he is imperious, and the wight who lags within his observation is covered with abuse and railery, liberally intermixed with oaths such as a Memphis man only can manufacture. He delights in spinning yarns of his exploits in the late unpleasantness, as he terms the rebellion, he having served in both the army and navy at that time.

The beds are both clean and comfortable, except a few rooms in which bed-bugs are said to exist. The table is good and a fair variety is given, but the hours are absurd, breakfast at seven, dinner at twelve, and tea at six. The water is taken from the river, and is simply a thin mud of a red clay color ; it is allowed to settle in tubs, when the thickest mud falls to the bottom, and the settled water looks like a mixture of clay and milk. This is freely drank by all on board, and many of the men prefer to dip the water out of the river. Suspecting the nature of this aqueous fluid, we furnished ourselves with a filter, and would it be credited, we were only allowed to use it with the consent of the captain, and after the first day, unless we filled it ourselves, no one else would do so. On suggesting to the steward that they should supply filters for the steamer, and that only filtered water should be used ; he laughed at the idea. "Why," said he, "I never drink the settled ; water when I find it settled I stir it up; prefer to drink it out of the river ; it is very healthy ; I have drank it thirty years and look at me, I am, for sixty, a fresh looking man yet. Don't you know that a lot of fellows barrel that water and send it East for people to drink, and make lots of money out of it." So we saw little chance for introducing this sanitary improvement. Fortunately for us we supplied ourselves with a stock of appollinaris and lemons and a few bottles of brandy, and we escaped any injurious effects of the dirty water of the Missouri. Our progress is extremely slow, owing to a combination of causes, such as the swiftness of

the current, which in some places is so rapid as to make it often doubtful if we can stem it—frequent stoppages necessary to replenish our wood supply, and stoppages to allow the sediment of mud to be cleaned out of the boilers, necessitating the letting out of the fires and escape of the steam. We have also lost time, having to take shelter from a high wind and repeatedly getting aground on mud-banks, and last, but not least, the serpentine windings of the great river, which often takes a course covering forty miles to reach a straight point of five or ten.

TIEING UP TO A BANK.

The banks for the most part are about six feet above the level of the water, and at places usually selected for landing consist of a loose aluvial soil or else soil of a sandy nature. Where trees are within reach, the bow-line is attached to the nearest and a gangway and plank are passed ashore. Where there are no trees, they put out "dead men," which consists of a stick of firewood buried in a hole three or four feet deep round which the line is fastened ; it is not put in like a post, but buried lengthways.

We stop usually twice a day for wood, using, as she does, forty-five cords a day. This is mostly supplied by white woodsmen but often, too, by Indians, who get paid generally in provisions and necessaries. In this sort of barter the redman is usually discontented and suspicious of his white customer, probably not without reason, although in the instance we are recording, I believe they were fairly dealt with. At these places the passengers usually go ashore and roam about for the short time she is tied up, and while some look around for a shot, others gather wild flowers, which grow abundantly, especially wild roses, some of which are really lovely. The traveller who, starting for the wild uncoppled country of the great West, usually imagines that he will find lots of game whenever he lands, and that he will see all sorts from the decks of the steamboat. Let my reader disabuse his mind of that falacy.

The story book and the emigration pamphlets are not to be trusted on these points, nor is it well to be too credulous of the traveller's stories of the abundance and easy access of game. We have now, at this date of writing, been eight days on the river, having covered 588 miles and landed about half a dozen times, and all the game we have seen has been one antelope, one deer, and

several broods of ducks and geese. Yet both the officers and passengers have old-time stories of extraordinary abundance of game on the river.

The first sight of an Indian settlement which we had was at Fort Berthold, 150 miles from Bismarck. We did not land here, but called to take on a passenger. What a motley crew they are! the men, in many instances, having nothing covering but a blanket. The squaws usually had leggings in addition to the blanket. Some had calico dresses. The blankets were of all colors. A few of the braves were ornamented with necklaces of beads and ear ornaments of shells. The men strolled about in lazy indifference, while the women and old men squatted on the ground, covering all but the face with the blanket. There are about 1,500 at this agency.

Our next view of "the noble red man" was a glimpse of part of Sitting Bull's tribe, who, having surrendered to the United States Government, were being transported in five steamboats to Fort Yates, or Standing Rock Agency, about seventy miles below Bismarck. There were about 1,700 men, women and children squatting about in all forms, some of the big warriors displaying their paint, costumes and handsome forms by temporarily throwing open their blankets. It seemed hard, after all, to see these people, owners of the soil, being carried hundreds of miles away from their homes, to be kept as prisoners of war, simply for defending their homes from the aggressions of the white man.

At Fort Buford we passed the night, and here we had our mail sent ashore. We several times interviewed Indians, from whom we bought wood. We passed Poplar Creek Agency about half past five in the morning. Here there are about 4,000 Indians. The lodges were about a mile from the river and looked like hundreds of cones placed without regard to regularity, the camp being enveloped in a lazy cloud of smoke, arising no doubt from the fires being kindled by the squaws for the preparation of the morning meal. Only a few came down to the boat. Among these we noticed a beautiful dusky maiden, clean and neat, with a beautiful blanket, fancy leggings, ear-rings and beads, her long black hair in three plaits, her forehead painted a yellowish red, the parting of her hair also painted red. She had beautiful teeth and a majestic walk, as she folded her blanket over

her and followed what appeared to be her father, who was also a fine type of a man.

Our next interview with the natives was at a wooding place. Here the contrast was most striking. The party consisted of four males and three females, one of which carried a papoose. Two of the men wore very common leggings and blankets. One of them had nothing but a shirt of dirty cotton, which was marked by hieroglyphics, his long, straight hair dirty and unkempt, his thin, dusky legs covered with mud, and the peculiar manner in which he squatted on the ground was animal-like in attitude. The shy, suspicious look of the females betokened the uncivilized condition of the tribe to which they belonged, and had we not formed more favorable impression before meeting these, our ideas of the Indian would have been perhaps unjust.

At Wolf Creek Agency, where there are between 3,000 and 4,000 Indians, their wigwams covering a large tract of land. They cultivate corn and barley. They have about forty acres of corn, which looks well. They have several hundred ponies. About 150 men, women and children came down to see the boat. Just before the arrival of the steamer, a poor little Indian boy had fallen over the bank into the river and was drowned. This may have increased the numbers who crowded the bank. Here we had a fine opportunity of seeing the different classes which form an Indian encampment. "Red Bird," the chief, did not favor us by appearing, but his wife and sister were there, but were it not for the wife of the agent, Mrs. Porter, who pointed them out, there was nothing about their dress to indicate their high social standing. There were squaws of all ages and sizes, while the majority were hideous to look at, dirty, old, wrinkled and almost mummified, squatting like animals and retiring within their blankets. There were many young, fresh and vivacious, full of fun and evidently appreciating any little marks of attention. Some were resplendent in all the finery of Indian belles, armlets of large brass or copper rings, earrings of pink or blue colored shells, strings of beads, ornamented moccasins and leggings and fancy colored blankets. The braves were even more ornamented than the squaws. One, a magnificent fellow, dressed in a grand buffalo-robe, with belt and shoulder strap, ornamented with beads and a large, bright tomahawk in his belt; in physique and attitude he would fill the most glowing picture

of the noble Indian of the story books. Our mate bargained for the robe, but as the warrior had no other garment on to hide his nakedness, he agreed to deliver it on the return trip of the boat. About a dozen were mounted on fairly good ponies, one or two were magnificently dressed in ornamented hunting shirts of buckskin, leggings, belts, beads, hatchets, knives, cartridge belt, copper bracelets, beads and earrings, their faces painted a dark copper red. The majority, however, had only leggings, with cartridge-belt in which the cartridges were strung in a row, the belt holding about 30 or 40 cartridges, buckled round the waist, and all covered by the blanket, most of them having the improved Winchester repeating rifle.

INDIAN POLICE.

We found here that a system of police was in operation among the Indians at these agencies, the constables being distinguished by badges, and at some of the agencies by a uniform of a blue blouse and trousers.

"At all agencies Indian policemen act as guards at annuity payments; render assistance and preserve order during ration issues; protect agency buildings and property; return truant pupils to school; search for and return lost or stolen property, whether belonging to Indians or white men; prevent depredations on timber, and the introduction of whiskey on the reservation; bring whiskey-sellers to trial; make arrests for disorderly conduct, drunkenness, wife-beating, theft, and other offences; serve as couriers and messengers; keep the agent informed as to births and deaths in the tribe, and notify him promptly as to the coming on to the reserve of any strangers, white or Indian. Vigilant and observant by nature, and familiar with every footpath on the reservation, no arrivals, departures or clandestine councils can escape their notice, and with a well disciplined police force an agent can keep himself informed as to every noteworthy occurrence taking place within his jurisdiction. Violation of the laws and regulations governing Indian reservation are punished by fine or imprisonment."—*Report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the year 1880.*

Some of our party pleased the braves by giving them tobacco and the fair maidens by candies, of which they seem very fond. One of our party, more gallant than the rest, became fascinated by the pleasant smile, the white teeth and pretty face of a dusky

maiden, jokingly expressed a wish to have her for his own, a wish which, unexpectedly to him, was communicated by an interpreter to her mother and brother, who agreed to make her his for the consideration of four ponies, which would cost about \$60 to \$80. This little bit of romance furnished us with no little amusement. However, our jocular friend, thinking discretion the better part of valor, and not knowing exactly how his first wife would approve the addition to the family circle, added another proof to the adage that men are deceivers ever. It was evident that, whatever the feelings of the maid may have been, her brother was not a little disappointed in being done out of his ponies.

Here also, just as we were leaving, we saw what appeared to be a race on ponies, five braves starting from the camp in full gallop, each urging his steed to the utmost till lost to view on the distant plain.

Our attention was directed to their dogs, two of which were as large as stag hounds, with pointed noses, pricked ears and wolfish eyes, with a slinking disposition, evidently a hybrid between the domestic dog and the prairie wolf.

For two days and nights we slowly steamed up the current, around the lazy windings of this torturous river, the repeated ring of the bell calling for soundings, and the slow sing-song call of the watch as he dips his pole or lead-line and drawls out in monotonous tones, which are repeated in as nearly as possible the same monotone by the colored boy on the upper deck for the benefit of the pilot:—"No-h-o-B-a-tt-aam," "Ae-te-faet-e," "Sae-xe-fae-te," "Four feet large," "Mark twain,"[†] "Quarter less twain," "Seven tae-te," and so it continues till the depth of water warrants the pilot in proceeding, or else it gradually shallows down till we are stuck in the mud and have to back out and find another channel. In many instances they have to use the spars and purchase-blocks to push her off as already described. Often, too, it is necessary to put out the yawl and take soundings in all directions till a channel is found.

A DEER KILLED IN THE WATER.

On the eighth day out we had the monotony broken by the discovery of a poor lone

[†] We here discovered the origin of the *nom-d c plume* of the American novelist, two fathoms (twelve feet).

doe, which evidently had swam across the river and landed where the bank was high, and being thus discovered was at the mercy of the merciless sports. Seeing escape on the land impossible, she took to the water and nobly struggled for dear life, but the progress of the boat and the downward force of the current soon brought her within range of the five rifles, which opened a fusilade on her. Fifteen shots were discharged, and despite her noble efforts and the ardent wishes of our fair passengers for her escape, a bullet from the rifle of our mate fractured her spine immediately in front of her shoulder, and death was instantaneous. The yawl being put out the steamer backed, and in a short time the beautiful creature was taken on board, and prepared to be cut up for Sunday's dinner.

BUFFALO IN SIGHT.

On Sunday morning after breakfast, while we were comfortably enjoying the warmth of the saloon stove, the cry of "buffalo in sight" caused us all to spring to our feet, and hastening on deck we observed six or eight of the wild cattle of the plains about a mile distant, which by the aid of a field-glass we were able to distinguish as the long looked-for buffalo. Distant though they were the sight had the effect of restoring our hitherto shaky confidence in the tales we had heard and read about of the herds of buffalo still to be seen in these wilds through which we pass. Here and there freshly-tramped paths from the trail to the water were seen. Doubtless thousands exist and could be found on the upland prairies or in the canons of the mountains, but the noise of the approaching steamboat no doubt frightens them out of view.

On the tenth day we find the river narrowing. The character of the country has become more mountainous, rising up several thousands of feet, and here and there the mountain peaks assuming the most grotesque shapes, in several places to the naked eye appearing like the ruins of an old embattled tower, here you would suppose was the ruin of an impregnable citadel, and again conical peaks rising up like live sentinels against the horizon. We pass many beautiful park-like bottom land studded with cotton-wood trees of a large size, looking like old English deer-parks, the ground being clothed with a rich verdure. The river pursues its ever winding course, now narrowing and deeping, and again widening out and becoming so shallow as to necessi-

tate the constant use of the lead to avoid the sand banks.

So far we have had cool, sometimes cold weather, and consequently no mosquitoes, for two days winter clothing and overcoats on deck and fires in the saloon are quite in order.

We have just passed the Musselshell River, near which is the ford by which the Indians from the north have been in the habit of crossing the Missouri on their way south. In the vicinity of the ruins of the ford is the grave of a white frontiersman, who was killed in an engagement with Indians in 1869, at which one white and twelve Indians lost their lives.

To the south of the Musselshell River is a tract of grazing land, said to be the best in Montana, and on which the Montana Stock Company have their ranche.

THE SUN DANCE.

On the north side of the river we saw the sun-dance poles. This is the second of these camps we have seen, a great dance having just been concluded at Wolf Point a day or two before our arrival.

PRAIRIE DOGS.

This afternoon we suddenly turned a bend of the river and came on what the captain of the steamer called a prairie dog village. These curious animals burrow in the ground and throw up earth mounds, in the openings of which they bask in the sun and utter their peculiar bark. There were several hundreds of these mounds. Their activity in disappearing seemed to be almost as quick as the rifle ball. Some of our party fired several shots at them without effect so far as we could see.

HALF-BREED CAMP.

About five miles further on we came upon a half-breed camp. As we stopped for wood, we went ashore and found them to be French-Canadian Indians from Wood Mountain. They spoke the French patois, some spoke broken English. They also spoke Sioux, Cree and Blackfoot Indian. They were a wandering band, most of them well-known to Captain Clarke, who captured the band on the eve of an engagement with Indians at Milk river in 1878, on suspicion of supplying the hostiles with arms and ammunition, and compelled them either to take the oath of allegiance or return to Canada. Some did the former, and some re-crossed into the Dominion. In physique, manners, dress and

comfort, they compared very unfavorably with the full blood Indians. Here we met a descending steamer, the Far West, and mailed our letters on her.

FORT CARROL.

In the evening we arrived at Fort Carroll, where we stopped for wood and to clean the boilers. It was raining heavily, yet this did not prevent the mixed population, consisting of Black-feet Indians, half-breeds and whites, crowding down to the steamboat. It is said to be the worst place in point of morals in this whole western country. Two nights before our arrival a white who had a quarrel with an Indian about a squew was enticed out of his cabin by the Indian on pretext of arranging peaceably their difficulty, when, with a treachery characteristic of the Indians, an accomplice immediately commenced firing at the white, who, however, was a match for them, and turning round he shot the deceiver dead, and, sending a bullet crashing through the brain of the other, he then fled to the military camp and reported the occurrence. The officer in command advised him to get out of reach as quickly as possible. The tribe, who were out hunting were at once notified, and returning went to the military camp to demand the white, who, fortunately, had gone. The officer moved his camp six miles from the place, and immediately reported the occurrence to headquarters. The Indians at this place are poor, squalid, and idle. We were informed that two barrels of whiskey had arrived at the place this morning; already we saw three Indians drunk. As this is not an Indian reservation it seems unfair that they should be allowed by the Government to remain here in such degradation.

LITTLE TWO-BITS.

Lieutenant Floyd, United States Cavalry, pointed out a bright little five-year old Indian boy named "Two-bits" who, a few weeks ago was brought to Carroll by his unnatural parents and sold for two-bits or twenty-five cents, to a gambler, who was already desirous of getting rid of him, and we were informed that he could be purchased for the sum of one dollar. One of the party was so struck by the circumstances of the case, and the bright, independent manner of the little fellow that he almost concluded to make the purchase, and probably would have done so, were it not for the long and arduous journey yet before us.

We are now in what are popularly known as "the bad lands," high clay banks, with precipitous mountains, rising probably 1,000 feet, here and there assuming peculiar shapes—now you would imagine you saw on the summit the remains of a castle of the olden time, now an embattled tower, here a tall chimney-like spire of clay, capped by a flat rock of shale.

WHERE CHIEF JOSEPH CAPTURED U. S. GOVERNMENT STORES.

We passed Cow Island where, in 1879, about a dozen soldiers who were guarding the Government stores, of which this is a depot from whence they are teamed to Fort Benton, were attacked by Chief Joseph and his band of Nez Perces Indians, who came down in one of the cooleys, crossed the river to Cow Island and thence to the opposite shore, where they were challenged by the guard and a hot fight ensued, during which the military had to retreat to the top of the plateau, leaving one of their number dead on the bank and the stores in the hands of Joseph and his band of warriors. General Mills, who was in hot pursuit of them, hearing of this fresh outrage, pushed forward, overtook and captured them at Bear Paw Mountain, about forty miles from Cow Island. Our informant, on being asked what punishment General Mills inflicted on these Indians, replied just what they always do. Joseph was well-fed, rested, had a fresh supply of blankets and ammunition, and sent back to his own reservation and turned loose, on his promising not to give any more trouble. It is the general impression of the frontiersmen whom we met on the journey, that the United States Government were to blame for a great deal of the Indian trouble by the leniency with which they treated them when caught in the act of rebellion or murder. We have, to-day, seen some deer, antelopes and one mountain sheep, at which several harmless shots were discharged.

A STORMY NIGHT.

The night set in dark and drizzling, gradually rising wind and lowering temperature and towards morning it blew a gale, and our progress, not fast at any time, now became dead slow until we reached a wood-yard where we tied up for several hours. As a prelude to the stormy night an accident, trivial in itself but sufficient on such a trip

to cause a little amusement, occurred to our neighbors in the adjoining room. No. 1 was in the upper bed fast asleep, when just as No. 2 was about to get in below, with a loud crash down came the bed, and No. 1 was found head down and heels up—being extracted from his uncomfortable position by his friend. Night was made hideous by the uncontrollable laughter of the pair, which was communicated to the rooms on each side, and it was some time before we got to sleep again. Pulling the steamer over the rapids by a rope. We arrived at the most difficult rapid to stem on the whole river at 3 p.m. to-day. It is called "Dead Man's Rapid," from the fact of nearly all those who are drowned above come to the surface here. It is over one hundred and twenty miles from Fort Benton. Several times the steamer unsuccessfully tried to stem the current; once she grounded on a ledge of rock, and finally it was found necessary to put a line ashore fully 1,000 feet up the bank where it was fastened to a "Dead Man," and by aid of the windlass she was gradually pulled up and

over the rushing current, which here runs with great rapidity.

During the day we have passed several cattle ranges on which the stock looked remarkably well as seen at a distance. We were informed that on these ranges the cattle were tolerably well bred.

Our course to-day lay through great high banks of hardened clay, which has been washed by the rains into most extraordinary shapes. Early this morning we passed a peculiar wall of lava, in the distance, it would be difficult to distinguish it from an artificially-built wall.

The chief point of interest to-day was the calling at the Coal Banks, which is a telegraph station, and here a company of United States soldiers are in camp during the summer to receive and distribute stores to the other posts. Here we parted with four of our fellow-passengers. The weather is lovely, bright clear and warm; the change is most enjoyable, and has improved the health and brightened the spirits of both men and animals, and in twenty-four hours more we reached Fort Benton.

